

DEAN STANLEY.

A VOLUME OF HIS POEMS AND LETTERS.

LETTERS AND VERSES OF ARTHUR PENNYRYN STANLEY, D. D., DEAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, 1829 and 1830. Edited by R. W. Prothero, M. A. Pp. vii, 454. Charles Scribner's Sons.

This volume reflects even better than Mr. Prothero's more formal "Life and Letters of Dean Stanley" the charming ease with which Stanley won his way. He was a prizeman from boyhood. The first letter given in these papers, written before the birthday of his fourteenth year, contains a long ode on the birth of a little cousin. The lines are as smooth, the rhymes as accurate, as if he thought as mature and as well expressed as if the poet had been ten years older. There is a reminiscence in it of classical translation and of readiness in English poetry, but boys of thirteen, even so among those destined to be poets, rarely do so well. The juvenile touch is reserved for a couple of footnotes. "Perhaps I have made the day too stormy," writes the little lyricist, "but never stormy mind," and again, not sure that his description of the lake—"Rosy cheeks and sparkling eyes"—is accurate, he says: "Perhaps I have not rosy, you may call them 'laughing,' and if that won't do, put 'cherry lips.' If you don't like 'sparkling eyes,' call them 'sweet blue,' if they are, or 'dark blue,' if they are not. But if they are any other color, I cannot remedy it except by 'filling.'"

On the eve of winning the Newdigate Prize at Oxford in 1851, he wrote to his mother that the poem by C. A. Brodie was superior to his own, but "so unlike a prize poem that I think it more doubtful whether it will succeed." His criticism on his own work, and that of his friend and rival is a model in its way, showing as it does that cool, reflective temper which made him always so certain of success. He saw that he had no one idea so poetical as that which pervaded Brodie's poem, but, on the other hand, his work was the better arranged, its expression was clear, his verses had anthology and point, and if they never rose to the level of Brodie's best, they never fell to the level of Brodie's worst. "Mine is the best poem and his the best poetry" was Stanley's epigrammatic conclusion. The verdict of the judges showed how correctly he had estimated the chances.

It was so in other matters, though he was inclined to consider it mere good fortune when he succeeded where others failed. Arthur Hugh Clough was a monument of ill luck which a really praiseworthy genius could not remedy. His failure to obtain a fellowship at Balliol in 1842 was a great disappointment to him and to his friends. It was as much of a blow to Stanley as to any one. He could not help lamenting, though he was only a distant admirer of Clough, that the profoundest man of his years that Rugby ever sent forth. Clough's eccentricities came in for discussion at the time, and there may have been something said of mental failure. At least Stanley found comfort in the fact that some of Clough's papers were splendidly done. "Not that I ever thought that the genius was gone," he added, "but I feared that the power of expressing it, the world was gone." Clough's very misfortunes invested him in Stanley's eyes with a kind of sacredness. "For, academically speaking, he was so unfortunately—so able, so laborious, and yet so unaccountably failing." How singular the contrast, thought Stanley, with his own "fortunate career."

Yet Stanley himself had his troubles about a fellowship, though he managed to put them in a light that a failure would have seemed a sacrifice to principle. Newman's influence was in 1857 strong in Oxford, and the rumor had gone forth that Stanley and all the other young Low Churchmen of Balliol College had been converted to the new way of thinking. This was obnoxious to Stanley, then and always a disciple of Dr. Arnold, but he remarked naively in a letter to his mother that the existence of the rumor showed how discreet he had been. He looked for trouble, and this came first in the refusal of a starch Newmanist in authority to sign his testimonials for deacon's orders. Then his prospects of a fellowship in Balliol vanished. He looked first to Oxford, but was later elected at University College. The whole controversy, while it merely delayed his ordination, contributed to make him known to the scholarly and religious public. This he was fortunate even in the little strokes of adversity that befel him. When the pendulum swung back again, when Newman turned to Rome and Dr. Arnold became Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, Stanley had his full share of the benefits that accrued from being on the winning side. He even cherished for a moment at Dr. Arnold's death the hope of succeeding to the professorship.

Courtly, genial, tolerant, never in any doubt as to his own position, Stanley found no difficulty in admiring others. His letters introduce the reader to many of the most noteworthy men of thought and action in the Europe of his day, to Guizot, Grote, the eccentric Church historian Neander, and others too many to name. His lifelong friendship with Jowett is evinced by a number of letters. Jowett's as well as his own. Jowett's letters are particularly interesting, since they show that acid and penetrating genius in a light somewhat different from that in which he appeared to those who merely got near enough to provoke or enjoy his sarcasm. With Stanley, Jowett took on the air of a recluse. Stanley called him "Melchizedek," and reckoned it one of his follies that he proposed corrections in the music of Beethoven. Jowett candidly confessed in one of his letters that discussions in theology had lost their freshness for him. His mind seemed at times quite dried up, partly, he thought, "from being strained out of proportion to the physical powers." Conversations between the two had been too intellectual and over-curious, he thought, and with all this there is one sentence of self-accusation: "Had I always done rightly, my life would doubtless have been happier and my mind clearer." His letters of consolation upon the death of Stanley's father, and many years later upon the death of Mrs. Stanley, display the most tender friendship. His great loss came in the death of George Eliot, "a friend never to be replaced." He added a line of criticism, "She was one of the few persons eminent in literature whose conversation was equal, or even superior, to her writings." The book is replete with these genial personalities. Not the least charming part of it is a series of letters which Dean Stanley wrote to the Queen from St. Petersburg at the time of the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh.

MAGAZINE NOTES.

The opinions held by Englishmen and Americans on one another have been threshed out in print so many times that it would seem unlikely that anything new could be said upon the subject. And indeed Mr. Richard Whiting, the author of "British Opinion of America," in the March "Scribner," tells nothing particularly new. But what he has to say is not very often, nor is it said with quite the common sense and straightforwardness which characterize his remarks. It is only a hazy, half-truth, equivalent for our Average Man, and he goes to the root of the matter when he shows that, except in certain commercial and religious directions, this important unit of the empire knows nothing of America, and has "opinions" according to his knowledge. "All the 'nice' things said as between country and country," observes Mr. Whiting, "are said by travelling millionaires or other persons of position." The democratic statement, and one which might provoke dissent and approval in equal measure, for it would be possible to support each side of the controversy with passages cited from international history. On the other hand, there can be no disagreement with the broad conclusion at which Mr. Whiting arrives, that the great mass of people in England are far less instructed about America than we are about Great Britain, and that the "Man in the Street" knows little of the history from the newspapers, and Mr. Whiting, who is a newspaper man himself, admits that English papers are conducted in such a way that "few of us get the best view of any country. The paper is no sense a 'chronicle du bien,' a record of the best in a nation's life." Our American readers all about the dreary Dunraven squabble, the bygonings, the peccadilloes, the fierce and bloody strikes that have almost the proportions of civil wars.

No one acquainted with English journalism and the men who make it is likely to differ with Mr. Whiting as to the explanation he gives of their contribution to British opinion of America. The high character of the best English papers is well known, and needs no more to be discussed than that of their parallel here. But the Man in the Street does not get his views from these, and, according to Mr. Whiting, the Man in the Street is in the majority. The opinion of that majority as regards America is in the main a fabulous affair, based on time to time by some light due to perfection, to the contact of an occasional Englishman with America or with an American. Coupled with the statement quoted above another equally accurate passage from Mr. Whiting's essay: "In spite of your annual excursions, our Average Man rarely meets an American," and the extent to which that "Average Man" may be taken seriously, in respect to this country and its doings, is clearly seen.

There is an interesting paper on "Carnations" in this number of "Harper's Magazine." The text and illustrations are good in the text and illustrations. The paper is also worthy of note, although in this case the many fine illustrations are wasted on a mass of amateurish and tiresome text.

In "Harper's Magazine" for March there is an abundance of well-written historical matter, like Mr. Wilson's essay on Washington as a colonel. There is also a charming and edifying scientific exposition, by Mr. Brewster, on the "Newspaper as a War-Ship." Among the stories there is an interesting narrative by Mr. Owen Wister, "Where Fanny Was Bred," wherein he deals cleverly with a gentler theme than he usually prefers; and toward the back of the magazine there is a sketch by Mr. Julian Ralph, which ought to have been placed more conspicuously for its contemporaneous and judiciously funny flavor. In "The Boss of Ling-Foo," the scamy story of Mr. Oriental life is admirably exploited by Mr. Ralph in some of the most modern and most interesting relations. But all these stories, histories and the rest, seem of no account whatever when the reader has once begun the article on "Arcadian Re-Ranching," by Miss Ninetta Eames. This writer is sometimes a little rhetorical, but on the whole she writes without affectation, and she brings to the pages of the magazine the fragrance and the hum of Californian slopes, where there are "leagues on leagues of ideal pasture, left solely to the harrowing of wild bees and various species of wasp and humming-bird." Miss Eames enjoyed her experience in these pastures so much, and she puts the picturesque of them into her essay with such sympathy and skill, that many a reader will feel inspired to take the next train for Southern California and turn Arcadian on the spot. One description from this charming paper, for two reasons, is to be left unquoted. Miss Eames had asked the writer to prevent his pen from swarming from taking to the hills. "Stopping in front of a hive where the swarm hung listlessly on the outside, my companion cautiously drew out from the black moving mass a small wire cage, and held it toward me. No fear but I should recognize imprisoned royalty behind those tiny bars. When once beheld, the queen bee can never be mistaken for either of her plebeian subjects, and she is so small and so only is she so far more elegant in shape, but she is so distinctive habit of crossing the tips of her wings after the helpless manner of gentled femininity in disposing of their hands. Truth, however, compels me to state that in this instance the dainty sovereign lacked the repose under indignity which imagination is wont to relegate to royalty. Her fretful racing to and fro savored of the impetuosity of a queen bee, and she was so small and so only is she so far more elegant in shape, but she is so distinctive habit of crossing the tips of her wings after the helpless manner of gentled femininity in disposing of their hands. Truth, however, compels me to state that in this instance the dainty sovereign lacked the repose under indignity which imagination is wont to relegate to royalty. 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